

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for producing an optical component from synthetic quartz glass, **said method comprising : in-that feeding** a coaxial arrangement comprising an outer jacket tube, an inner jacket tube provided with an internal bore, and a core rod having a lower face end resting on an abutment within the internal bore ~~is-fed~~ in vertical orientation to a heating zone, **softening said coaxial arrangement is softened** therein zonewise and **elongating said coaxial arrangement elongated** to obtain the **optical quartz glass** component, ~~wherein characterized in-that~~ the abutment is configured as a constriction of the internal bore of the inner jacket tube.
2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, ~~wherein characterized in-that~~ the constriction is provided with an axially continuous opening.
3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~or claim 2, wherein~~ ~~characterized in-that~~ the core rod comprises a core region having an outer diameter " d_K " surrounded by a cladding glass layer having an outer diameter " d_M ", **wherein a the ratio of the outer diameter of the cladding glass layer " d_M " to the outer diameter of the core region " d_K " ranges ranging from 2 to 4, preferably from 2.5 to 3.5.**
4. (Currently Amended) The method according to **claim 1 any one of the preceding claims, wherein** ~~characterized in-that~~ the core rod is formed from butt-jointed core rod pieces.
5. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 4, ~~wherein characterized in-that~~ the core rod pieces are loosely stacked one upon the other.
6. (Currently Amended) The method according to **claim 1 any one of the preceding claims, wherein** ~~characterized in-that~~ a mechanical stop is provided which prevents an upward movement of the core rod in a direction opposite to ~~a the~~ pulling direction.

7. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims, wherein the core rod and the inner jack tube define therebetween~~ characterized in that an inner annular gap with having a mean gap width in a ~~the~~ range between 0.5 mm and 1.5 mm is ~~provided between the core rod and the inner jacket tube.~~
8. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims, wherein the inner jack tube and the outer jacket tube define therebetween~~ characterized in that an outer annular gap with having a mean gap width of not more than 2 mm, ~~preferably of not more than 1 mm, is provided between the inner jacket tube and the outer jacket tube.~~
9. (Currently Amended) The method according claim 1 ~~to any one of the preceding claims, wherein~~ characterized in that the inner jacket tube is movably held in a lateral direction.
10. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims, wherein~~ characterized in that a holding cylinder of quartz glass is fused onto an ~~the~~ upper end of the outer jacket tube.
11. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 10, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the holding cylinder ~~comprises~~ has a circumferential groove ~~for the engagement of in~~ which a gripper engages the holding cylinder.
12. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims, wherein~~ characterized in that a first holding means engages an ~~the~~ upper end of the outer jacket tube, and ~~that~~ a second holding means engages an ~~the~~ upper end of the inner jacket tube, the first holding means and the second holding means being mechanically independent of each other.
13. (Currently Amended) The method according to any one of claim 1 ~~claims 1 to 11,~~ wherein ~~characterized in that~~ a first holding means engages an ~~the~~ upper end of the

outer jacket tube, and that ~~an the~~ upper end of the inner jacket tube is held on the outer jacket tube or on the first holding means.

14. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 13, ~~wherein characterized in that~~ the upper end of the inner jacket tube or a mechanical extension of the inner jacket tube is provided with an outer collar which rests on the outer jacket tube or on a mechanical extension thereof.
15. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims, wherein characterized in that~~ the inner jacket tube has a mean hydroxyl group content of less than 1 wt ppm.
16. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims, wherein characterized in that~~ the inner jacket tube is produced by elongating a hollow cylinder which has been mechanically treated to a final dimension.
17. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims, wherein characterized in that~~ the outer jacket tube comprises ~~is present as~~ a hollow cylinder which has been mechanically treated to a final dimension.
18. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~any one of the preceding claims, wherein characterized in that~~ the outer jacket tube is provided with a downwardly tapering lower end.
19. (new) The method according to claim 1, wherein the core rod comprises a core region having an outer diameter surrounded by a cladding glass layer having an outer diameter, wherein a ratio of the outer diameter of the cladding glass layer to the outer diameter of the core region ranges from 2.5 to 3.5.
20. (new) The method according to claim 1, wherein the inner jacket tube and the outer jacket tube define therebetween an outer annular gap having a mean gap width of not more than 1 mm.